

March 19, 1976

SENATOR KOCH: Mr. President, members of the body. A question of Senator George, if he'd yield.

SENATOR GEORGE: Yes.

SENATOR KOCH: Would you please explain the purpose of this amendment one more time? I didn't quite pick it up.

SENATOR GEORGE: Senator Koch, the purpose of this amendment is simply that I am sure that everyone in the faculty does get six percent. There is one percent left for merit increases, so there is a flexibility that the deans and department heads can recommend for some outstanding faculty member a particular merit increase. But we did leave just seven percent to them, therefore, they could have come up with, let's say, maybe half a percent increase to somebody or nothing, and a 12 percent increase or 15 percent increase for somebody else. I would like to tie it down and see that everybody does get an increase, specifically the teaching faculty. I had no guarantee without this amendment that that would actually happen.

SENATOR KOCH: I guess I have to rise reluctantly to not support Senator George. I happen to be a person who believes when you're in a profession that merit pay is absolutely necessary. Just because you're in a system another day, another year, does not necessarily mean you're entitled to the same increases all the time. If you look at the University system it's a system that should reward the outstanding teaching, the outstanding publisher, the outstanding worker in a community. I don't believe, that doing this, that you're going to provide that administrator with enough leeway to make any consideration that is indeed deserving of meritorious remuneration.

If you look at the University of Nebraska staff I'm sure you'll find, as many of us are finding out, that we are losing people to other states. It's a matter of 5 to 10, 15 thousand dollar salary differences. In fact, there is a Department over here that's in danger of losing its accreditation because we have lost 10 percent of the Department within the last few months; some of them going to neighboring states simply because the opportunity is greater in terms of the financial rewards.

I believe in the ability of an administrator, if he's the dean of the department or the chairman, to make that determination. I was once the chairman of a department in a high school system. Each year I had to determine what merit was going to be for members of that department. There were 15 of them in that department. I could do it without any problem. It wasn't a brown-nose situation, it was based upon five criteria in terms of what the students evaluate a person on, in terms of his own professional growth, in terms of the services committed to that community. They got merit, some of them as high as \$1500 in a high school system.